

we forfeit the moral authority that has distinguished America among the family of nations, we had better be sure we've taken every reasonable step to resolve this crisis without bloodshed.

Until then, I cannot support a resolution that gives the President a blank check to launch a military strike that meets none of the legal requirements for preemptive action. We have been down that road before. It is not a lesson we should have to learn again. And it's not the kind of example that the United States should set for the world.

□ 0040

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remaining time.

Let me conclude by thanking the majority for the kindness and the thoughtfulness that they have given us. The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) should be commended, as I mentioned earlier, a gentleman always, but to allow everyone to have a word to say.

The past 2 days with over 24 hours of debate has been an historic time in this House. A debate has endured that will be noted and will be long-remembered what was said here. We have debated fundamental changes in the manner in which this country operates, first strike preemptive. Definitely a new course of action for this Nation.

Of course, first strikes are nothing new. In the medieval times there were many, France into Germany, Spain into Italy. In 1918, Germany entered France. December 7, Japan attacked the United States. So there has been preemptive strikes but never the greatest Nation in the world taking a decision to make first strikes preemptive, and so this is a new day for this great Nation.

The Framers of the Constitution, the Jeffersons and the Adams and Washingtons and Hamiltons, said let us be careful about power. We do not want a king or emperor or dictator, and, therefore, let us give the power of war to the Congress.

Here we are abdicating that responsibility and giving the right to declare war to one person, to say it is his decision to do what he wants and he has 48 hours to tell us later what he has done. Another principle that we have changed.

We jeopardize a coalition because I believe right now our number one fight is the battle against terror. The al Qaeda cells that are in this country and in 50 other countries and a false feeling of security will emerge when we attack Iraq if that is done, and Americans will, therefore, believe that there is a sense of security now and al Qaeda is gone. There is definitely a difference between the al Qaeda cells and the government of Iraq, and so we are leading people down a wrong path to believe that a defeat of Iraq, therefore, eliminates the war on terror.

We have heard recently that there is a connection between al Qaeda and the government of Iraq. This only was revealed in the last week or so. Many

wonder where this information is coming from and whether, in fact, it is indeed true. And, once again, we should not lull our people into a false feeling of security when we look over there and say Iraq is done, we are safe again, when the war on terror will still be here.

So we talk about a new concept, regime change, Saddam Hussein should go. This is a tall order. How do we do it? How long do we stay? How dangerous will it be? How costly will it be? How are we going to rehabilitate Afghanistan? We have not drilled the pumps to reach the low water tables as we promised. We have not started construction of schools as we said. We have not built the hospitals as we promised, but now we will go into Iraq and for how much? What will the cost be? \$100 billion? \$200 billion? No one really knows.

As the DOW has dropped from close to 11,000 down to close to 7,000, almost a 40 percent drop, how can we fund this? We spend \$1 billion a day today on a \$350 billion defense budget, with another couple of hundred billion dollars on the side. How can we do it with the unmet needs of PELL grants and student loans, the needs for prescription drug benefits for seniors and section 8 housing, vouchers funding for elementary and secondary schools in the leave no child behind legislation? How do we deal with that?

So as we move to vote we should engage the U.N., we should encourage them and support the inspectors to find and destroy those biological and chemical weapons of mass destruction. We should leave no stone unturned. We should go unfettered. We should demand that, and I believe then we can have the avoidance of war. We should attempt to avoid war at any cost. I do not believe that the United States is eliminating the danger of the al Qaeda cells in this country by us having a war and attack on Iraq.

I would like to say that we are a mighty powerful country. Let us use our power and might. We love this country. In school I used to recite the poem, This is my country, land of my birth; this is my country, the grandest on earth; and I pledge thee my allegiance, America the bold, because this is my country to have and to hold.

Let us not misuse the power that we have, but let us be sure that Saddam Hussein is contained, that this world is free of tyrants like that. Let us support the inspectors going in.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remaining time.

Mr. Speaker, as I close, I would like to thank the gentleman from New Jersey. This has been, in fact, a long debate. It has been spirited at times, but, in fact, it has always lived up to the gravity of what we are considering, and we owe that in no small part to the gentleman from New Jersey.

The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) has empowered me to close, and I take that as a very unusual thing for a freshman and something that is pretty important for somebody who not only supports this resolution but who supports this resolution often to the dismay of other Arab Americans.

My family emigrated from the Middle East, one side of my family emigrated from the Middle East, and I bear an Arab surname, and so for me and I think for many people who are going to support this resolution tomorrow, this has to be a special case. We are not pushing an 11-year or 12-year war to the brink of a final military conflict lightly.

I would call the Speaker's attentions to these advertisements that came out of Baghdad September 11 and a year after September 11 as just another example of what is different about Saddam Hussein's regime.

After September 11, both as a member of the Committee on International Relations and I believe as one of the Members of this body whose ancestry goes back to the Middle East, I was visited by not just one but every single ambassador from the Middle East represented in this country. In every case they expressed their horror, their sympathy and distanced themselves from the terrible events of September 11; and they did so in private, not intending to do it for the camera, but so that I would understand. And I am sure they visited virtually every other Member so they would understand that that is not what the Arab people are about, that is not what Arab society, one of the great societies that helped create the world as we know it today, is about.

It is not what the Iraqi people are about, and to put out propaganda in the Baghdad press talking about September 11 being Allah's revenge, in fact, says it all about this regime.

Saddam Hussein and his party and his almost 30-year rule has been all about killing and violence and hatred. He is not alone, but he is in a league of his own. And as we close for tonight and we move into tomorrow's short debates of 1 hour and final passage probably by midday, I hope that all of us will remember that this is not about Arab people, not in this country and not anywhere in the world.

The need to empower the President to take this action, should it become necessary, is all about the uniqueness of this administration of Saddam Hussein and the actions he has taken in the past, he takes in the present, and we are quite certain that if that regime is not changed or replaced, he will take in the future.

I say as one Arab American to the many Arab Americans and Muslim Americans in this country and perhaps to the Arabs around the world, America and particularly my community in America has absolutely no hatred and no willingness to participate in anything that is adverse to the Arab people.